

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

FOR

Economic Justice Action Plan

Issued by the St. Louis Development Corporation

Proposals Due By:
1:00 PM CST on August 16, 2021
St. Louis Development Corporation
ATTN: Daffney Moore
1520 Market Street, Suite 2000
St. Louis, Missouri 63103-2630
(314) 657-3772
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Introduction and Background

The St. Louis Development Corporation (“SLDC”) is issuing this Request for Proposals (“RFP”) for a qualified firm or firms to assist in the development an Economic Justice Action Plan (“EJAP”). The EJAP will guide SLDC in formulating programs, policies and initiatives designed to implement the City of St. Louis [Equitable Economic Development Framework](#) (the “Services”). SLDC is seeking proposals from qualified firms with a comprehensive understanding of economic and community development finance, social impact investing, the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI), and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), as well as extensive experience developing and implementing strategic plans for economic development agencies. SLDC encourages collaboration and joint applications among various service providers that may have unique strengths and experiences in certain disciplines necessary for the successful completion of the project described in this RFP.

St. Louis Development Corporation (SLDC) is an umbrella, not-for-profit with the mission of fostering economic development and growth in the City of St. Louis by stimulating the market for private investment in City real estate and business development and improving the quality of life for everyone who lives in, works in, and visits the city.

Scope of Services

Consultants will assist SLDC’s efforts to align institutional capacity and financial resources in order to close the racial wealth gap and provide equitable opportunities for all residents, businesses, and neighborhoods to thrive by developing an action-oriented plan to address historical barriers and economic inequities through three primary pillars:

1. Economic Empowerment

- a. **Workforce Development** – Invest in the capacity building of our youth, unemployed and underemployed residents, and grow the workforce of the future to align with quality jobs and regional priorities with a focus on technology, healthcare, logistics, finance, emerging markets, geo-spatial, construction, and manufacturing fields.
- b. **Business Empowerment** – Build an ecosystem for women and minority business enterprise (M/WBE)s to access capital, technical assistance, mentorship, sponsorship, and networking opportunities to launch, grow, and sustain their businesses long-term.

2. Neighborhood Revitalization

Invest in the capacity and wealth building in North City neighborhoods by providing access to economic opportunities through homeownership, anti-displacement entrepreneurship, and career-oriented transit.

3. Equitable & Inclusive Development

Leverage real estate development and business retention and expansion programs as the economic engine to drive a robust and resilient economy through an equitable, transparent, and accountable incentive model, Community Benefit Agreements, and policy measures advancing economic justice.

The Services the Consultant will provide for the three pillars may include, but are not limited to:

- Assisting in developing and implementing strategies and plans for the use and coordination of ARPA funds to catalyze the COVID-19 economic recovery, and advance our economic justice efforts in alignment with agencies including PDA, CDA, AHTF, SLATE, Lambert Airport, the St. Louis Economic Development Partnership, BiState Development, Great Rivers Greenway, and plans including the Forward Through Ferguson Report, the [Equitable Economic Development Framework](#) and the [2030 Jobs Plan](#).
- Leveraging municipal funds, corporate dollars, private and family foundations, and TIF allocations to seed a revolving loan fund committed to advancing economic justice by connecting small businesses with low interest loans, homeowners suffering from low appraisals with second mortgages and proactively supporting transformative projects with funding site assembly and critical infrastructure.
- Developing policies to ensure that tax incentives, low interest loans, grant funding, and other forms of financial support are awarded according to transparent, equitable, accessible and inclusive processes
- Assessing the magnitude of the regional workforce development gap, identifying key growth clusters, and developing strategies to connect residents to opportunity by expanding regional remedial education, job training and certification programs.
- Supporting SLDC in planning for and opening an economic empowerment center in North St. Louis including both workforce development resources, and back office support (i.e. HR, legal, accounting, marketing) to prospective entrepreneurs and small businesses
- Developing and implementing strategies designated to maximize federal and state financial assistance, including New Markets Tax Credits, the Build Back Better program and other federal relief programs and grants.
- Assisting the city in building a strategy to transform the city's vacant land from a liability to an asset.
- Designing and executing engagement sessions with SLDC, PDA, CDA, AHTF, and SLATE staff and SLDC and constituent agency board members. The engagement questions should be based on the common priorities and strategies identified in the Equitable Framework and regional plan review. There may be additional individual interviews with board members or staff, as needed.
- Integrating feedback from SLDC, PDA, CDA, AHTF and SLATE staff, SLDC and constituent agency board members, , and elected officials. Where gaps exist in stakeholder feedback, the consultant will be directed to perform additional individual

stakeholder interviews that the team requests, including community engagement sessions open to the public.

- Writing a plan to reflect the priorities, strategies and equity metrics best aligned with the mission and staffing of the SLDC. It is anticipated that early and later drafts will be reviewed by SLDC staff.

Proposal Criteria

Responses to this Consultant RFP must include the following information:

1. **Cover Letter** - The Cover letter is to be signed by an officer of the firm authorized to execute a contract with SLDC.
2. **Consultant Team Qualifications** - This section shall describe the areas of expertise of members of the consultant team, including the consultant's permanent staff, and the types of services that the lead firm and any supportive team members can provide and have demonstrated experience in completing for municipal clients and economic development entities.
3. **Key Personnel** - Include a proposed project management structure. Identify the key contact for the project and all personnel who will be assigned to work on this project, including a description of their abilities, qualifications, and experience. A meeting facilitator shall be included as part of the project team. Include resumes for all key individuals. There can be no change of key personnel once the proposal is submitted without the prior approval of SLDC.
4. **Project Understanding & Approach** - A description of project understanding, work approach and methodology will be identified.
5. **Project Schedule** - Propose a general timeline for completion for the Services including start date, milestones, and target date of completion.
6. **Project Experience & References** - Provide brief descriptions of three (3) projects dealing with economic development, master plans, or similar topics prepared by or under the direction of your firm. Please also include a list of three (3) to five (5) references.
7. **Budget** - Provide a detailed fee for the services identified in the scope of services in this proposal. Identify sub-tasks and the respective cost in your fee proposal as necessary. This section of your proposal shall include a professional fee schedule for the consultant's personnel and the subcontractor's key personnel identified above who would be working on this project. Hourly fees for additional or optional services that may be required shall also be included.

8. **Disclosure of Potential Conflict of Interest** - Provide a statement regarding any potential conflict of interest issues your firm, its principals or any of the listed individuals [the other team members] might have or encounter if your firm is selected as the Consultant.

The Consultant's services may involve interaction with a number of City public officials including, but not limited to, members of the Board of Aldermen, various departments and offices of the City, representatives of SLDC and its affiliated agencies and authorities. Please indicate whether the firm, its principals or any of the listed individuals have adverse relationships or adverse interests with any of the above-reference parties or relationships or interests that may present a conflict of interest.

Respondents to this RFP must also disclose any other local government entities in the State of Missouri with which they, their principals or the listed individuals are currently doing business or with which they have done business of this same nature over the past three years.

9. **M/WBE Participation** - The City of St. Louis is committed to the growth and development of women and minority business enterprise (M/WBE). In furtherance of this commitment, the policy of the City of St. Louis is to encourage minority participation in all contracts financed in whole or in part by the City and its affiliated agencies and authorities. The City seeks to obtain participation by women and minority owned business enterprises and has as a goal at least twenty-five percent (25%) minority business enterprise participation and at least five percent (5%) women business enterprise participation, as provided for by Mayor's Executive Order #28 and Ordinance #70767.

Selection Criteria

Proposals submitted will be reviewed by a selection committee convened in compliance with the city code for completeness and qualifications. SLDC may request additional clarifying information from any or all consultants that submit a proposal during the review process. The selection committee will make a recommendation to the SLDC Board on the selection of the consultant determined to be the most qualified for the project. It is anticipated that SLDC and the selected firm will enter into a professional services contract for the period beginning August 2021 through December 31, 2021.

Selection of a firm will be made based on the following criteria:

1. Qualifications, expertise, and experience of the firm;
2. Experience and background of the specific personnel that will be assigned to the SLDC's project as outlined in the proposal, including consideration of the specific involvement of those persons in projects as noted in the proposal, including sub-consultants.
3. Availability and timeline to provide the services;
4. Approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion;
5. Responsiveness of the firm to the RFP categories;

6. Firm's project approach and understanding of the Scope of Services required in the RFP as evidenced by its proposal, including whether all requested information was furnished in the format required by the RFP and estimated costs.
7. Past record of performance and experience on similar projects, including strength of references listed in the Proposal.
8. Capacity and capability of the firm to perform the work.
9. Experience with city government officials and federal regulations.

The SLDC actively encourages submission of proposals from disadvantaged business enterprises and companies owned by minorities, women, immigrants, and veterans. The SLDC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, ancestry, national origin, disability, or veteran status in consideration of this award. Equal Opportunity Employer.

No Guarantee of Work

SLDC reserves the right to:

- a. Reject any or all proposals for any reason, in its sole and unfettered discretion;
- b. Void this RFP and the review process and/or terminate negotiations at any time;
- c. Revise any conditions and stipulations contained herein, as convenient, or necessary;
- d. Further negotiate financial and other arrangements;
- e. Establish further criteria for selection;
- f. Ask respondents to submit additional information with respect to any aspect of respondent's submission whatsoever;
- g. Waive any informalities and/or irregularities in the submission of proposals and in the proposal process;
- h. Choose one or multiple offerors;
- i. Define "best" offer in its sole and unfettered discretion;
- j. Negotiate with respondents as to any aspect of respondent's proposal whatsoever.

By accepting this RFP and/or submitting a proposal in response thereto, each respondent agrees for itself, its successors, and assigns, to hold SLDC and its agents, commissioners, directors, consultants, attorneys, officers and employees harmless from and against any and all claims and demands of whatever nature or type, which any respondent, its representatives, agents, contractors, successors, or assigns may have against any of them as a result of issuing this RFP, revising this RFP, conducting the selection process and subsequent negotiations, making a final recommendation, selecting a Purchaser/Redeveloper and/or negotiating or executing an agreement incorporating the commitments of the selected Purchaser/Redeveloper.

Proposals should be limited to 25 pages. No proposal received after the specified date and time will be accepted, unless the specified date and time included in this document is extended or all proposals are rejected and a subsequent RFP is issued.

By submitting a response to this RFP, each respondent acknowledges having read this RFP in its entirety and agrees to all terms and conditions set out in this RFP.

By submitting a response to this RFP, respondent commits that, if selected, respondent is willing and able to carry out the development proposed in accordance with the schedule proposed and as described in respondent's proposal.

By submitting a response to this RFP, respondent acknowledges that:

This RFP is not a contract or a commitment of any kind by SLDC and does not commit SLDC to award an exclusive contract or to pay any cost incurred in the submission of a response. SLDC in its sole discretion reserves the right to accept or reject in whole or in part, submittals received in response to this request, to negotiate with any qualified source, or to cancel in whole or in part this RFP.

All submitted materials will become the property of SLDC and may become public documents at any time during the selection process and at the conclusion of the selection process. Any and all documents submitted by the Respondent may become public pursuant to the Missouri Sunshine Law.

By submitting a response to the RFP, each respondent expressly waives any and all rights that it may have to object to, protest, or judicially any part of this solicitation and RFP process, including but not limited to the selection procedure selections of the RFP.

Proposal Submission Deadline

The submissions must be six (6) copies of your proposal and must be received in the office of SLDC by 1:00 p.m. on August 16, 2021. Proposals should be mailed or delivered to:

Neal Richardson
Executive Director
St. Louis Development Corporation
1520 Market Street, Suite 2000
St. Louis, Missouri 63103

Inquiries

Please direct all inquiries concerning this Consultant RFP or the project in writing to:

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1520 Market Street, Suite 2000
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mooreda@stlouis-mo.gov